

music

ARJAN TIMMERMANS



Gleaning best from three indie CDs, Mia Doi Todd releases major-label album high on substance, symbolism.

Mia's metaphors

AT FIRST LISTEN, THE SONGS OF MIA Doi Todd make no sense. The lyrics are complicated, and her acoustic melodies tend to be incoherent and hard to grasp.

But then again, she never pretended to be mainstream. On the contrary, Todd demands active attention with music that is anything but coincidental.

The singer and self-taught musician recently debuted her first major label album "The Golden State" on Sony's Columbia Records. The company decided to re-record and re-arrange some of her earlier work to configure it for a wider audience. These songs appeared on her previous three indie records: "The Ewe and The Eye" (1997), "Come Out of Your Mine" (1999) and "Zeroone" (2001).

The album was produced by Mitchell Froom — who earlier worked with David Byrne and Elvis Costello — in an attempt to make Todd's complex arrangements and storytelling a bit more accessible. Todd's earthy songs and ethereal voice are unique, even though her minimalist approach bears a slight resemblance to the electro-folk of Beth Orton.

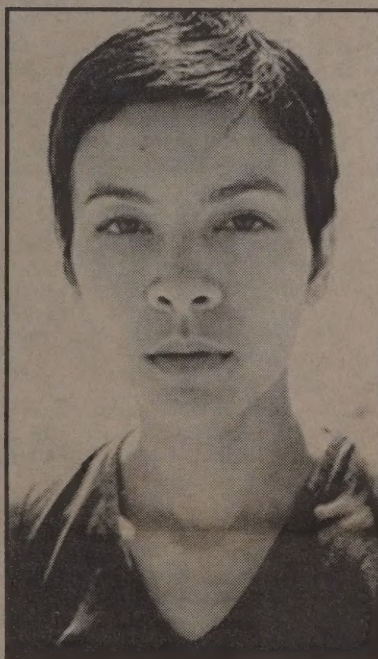
On the album, which was recorded last February in Los Angeles, Mia plays acoustic guitar, piano and keyboard. Joining her are bassist Davey Faragher, drummer Jerry Marotta, guitarist Nel Cline and Kraig Grady, who plays glockenspiel on "Hijikata."

MIA DOI TODD IS THE DAUGHTER OF a Japanese-American judge and an Irish-American sculptor. Her multi-cultural upbringing in Los Angeles fueled her interest in foreign culture and religion. She majored in East Asian Studies at Yale University, and during her time in college, she began to write songs and play the guitar. The Yalie made her first performances in clubs and coffeehouses in New Haven, Conn., New York and back at home in Los Angeles.

The album's title obviously refers to her home state. But Todd's metaphorical songwriting gives it a deeper meaning. According to the singer, "The Golden State" also refers to some sort of utopia — an ideal society with a perfect, ecstatic union of individuals.

"The Golden State descends upon the human body and mind," she explains. "It comes in our moments of clarity and heightened consciousness, when life spills open and all opposites unite and disappear."

Only using chords sparingly, Todd explicitly describes the notion of contrast and harmony on the song "Digital," when she sings: "Digital, binary system,



Mia Doi Todd offers a mix of complicated songs on her new album 'The Golden State.' (Photo by Sasha Eisenman)

ones and zeroes, dark versus light, yin and yang, x and y, my mother and my father made me one night."

The album's most accessible song, "Autumn," describes the passing of a relationship as if it is a simple change of season: "The leaves let go, so let them go."

A bit denser are the artist's songs that cover individual freedom ("Merry Me," "Independence Day"), resistance to change ("Growing Pains") and the evocative feelings of inner turmoil in an unpredictable world ("Age of Reason").

Todd simultaneously shows vulnerability and strength in her verses. She exposes her insecurities as a female and global citizen but also takes a stand when it comes to defending her liberties.

Todd's music might be too diffuse for many, but she is scoring high marks on substance. Her work demands attention and "The Golden State" proves that she more than deserves it.

MORE INFO

Mia Doi Todd
'The Golden State'
Columbia Records, 2002
www.miaidoitodd.com



THE HOLIDAY EVENT OF THE SEASON!

Worldspan presents

ATLANTA BALLET'S NUTCRACKER

WITH THE ATLANTA BALLET ORCHESTRA

NOVEMBER 30
THROUGH
DECEMBER 29

FABULOUS FOX THEATRE

[ticketmaster](http://ticketmaster.com)

404 817-8700

www.atlantaballet.com

Group Sales: 404 873-5811 x207

Children 16 and under
save 50% off tickets!



ATLANTA BALLET
IT'S HAPPENING HERE

SPONSORED BY

worldspan



SEASON SPONSOR

Delta



YOUR VIDEO IS OUR PROJECT!



Custom
Video Memory Books,
Video Duplication,
Digital Conversion,
Media Production,
and Much More!

"The" Unique Holiday Gift

Visit our website for Production samples.
WWW.PROJECTVIDEO.NET

(404) 299-0299

120 North Avondale Road
Avondale Estates, GA 30003

VISA

MasterCard

dish

There's a Fine Line Between Telling the Truth and Talking Trash

Damn the Thorpedo

Aussie swimmer, Olympic medalist Ian Thorpe pulls a Mike Piazza and comes out — as straight



Sexy Australian Swimmer Ian Thorpe sets the record, and his orientation, straight.

IF YOU LIVED IN AUSTRALIA, IT WOULD be summer and you would love swimming, because down under, swimming is as big as baseball or football in this country. IAN THORPE, one of Australia's hottest swimmers — in both sense of the word — has been the MICHAEL JORDAN of his world since the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

This year, 20-year-old Thorpe, nicknamed the Thorpedo, was a spectator at the 2002 Gay Games, which were held in the same city. But Thorpe was not there to compete, to watch his boyfriend or to check out all the Speedos.

"I mean I'm straight, so people want to claim me as part of a minority group and put labels on you and that's not what I'm about, and I don't understand why people are like that," Thorpe told Australian ABC radio. "I don't try and sound macho, with an Australian accent just for the sake of having it. I have an interest in fashion, I have interests in things most people don't label as being part of the macho male thing."

Thorpe's good looks and even better wardrobe (did we mention that he also has his own line of jewelry?) have caused major speculation, both public and private, about his sexual orientation. And he finally decided to go MIKE PIAZZA and address the rumors.

"You know I'm a little bit different to what most people would consider being an Australian male. That doesn't make me gay," he said.

The editors of Outsports.com, a Web site for gay sports fans and the world's premier outlet for gay sporting news, claims that after Thorpe's Gay Games appearance they were interviewed for a story in case Thorpe decided to come out. Well, he came

out, but not like we're used to.

"It's perfectly cool now to be straight and have an interest in Armani fashion or pearl jewelry or KYLIE MINOGUE — why shouldn't it be?" said MARCUS O'DONNELL, editor of gay newspaper the Sydney Star Observer. "It's great that Thorpe is now confident enough to address these rumors head on."

Well, Thorpe, Dish wishes you the best of luck with the straight thing. But if you and your size 17 shoes ever change your mind, give Dish a call.

Top dogs

ATLANTA MAGAZINE'S "BEST OF Atlanta" issue, which hit stores last week, didn't forget to name several gay "winners" of note.

Southern Voice's own MICHAEL ALVEAR garnered kudos for his viewpoint column as "Best Dish." Though the title may not be appropriate for Alvear's content, this Dish knows it's the thought that counts.

"Sure, he offends some of the time, but we all should have a friend this funny and frank," the magazine says.

Thank goodness SoVo readers do.

Gay Marietta native ALAN BALL — yes, they do grow 'em gay in Cobb County, they just don't usually stay there long — has gone from the Oscar-winning "American Beauty" to the Emmy-winning "Six Feet Under." He got the magazine's nod for "Best Grim Reaper."

Piedmont Park, also known as Gay Ground Zero, was named "Best Place to Take a Pet." Gay Atlanta author JIM GRIMSLEY'S "Boulevard" was called "Best Novel of Sexual Awakening," and MILT THOMAS, the Georgia-grown gay director of "Claire," was named "Best Rising Talent."

Rounding out the Nightlife section, My Sister's Room and Blake's on the Park were named Atlanta Magazine's "Best Alternative Bars."



Send comments, suggestions to
Dish@sovo.com.

THIS WEEKEND'S DJ'S

Friday 9 PM - 5 AM
Bill Berdeaux
www.billberdeaux.com

Saturday 9 PM - 5 AM
Rob Reum
www.robreum.com

Friday and Saturday 5 AM until...
LLP Steven

Up in the Penthouse 4 AM until...
George Greenlee

Friday
Worship through Rhythm
with DJ Rob Reum
Every Sunday from 2 AM until...
"Worship through Rhythm"

Sundays
Amor & Soul
The Intimate Camp Drive
In the South of the City at 8 PM

Mondays
Energy
2 Super Charged
Shows at 11 & 4-5 PM
on the Dance Floor!

Wednesdays
Spot
with Hosts Juan Cezar
& Monica Van Pelt
in the Chapel at 11 PM

Backstreet Atlanta

COINTREAU

ALWAYS BE A LITTLE BIT CRAZY
BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO
STAY ALIVE IN THE CITY OF
ATLANTA

WWW.BACKSTREETATLANTA.COM

the Cranky Princess

Gifts and Home Accents to Lighten the Heart
Stone Mountain Village • 988 Main Street • Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Votive Candles • Do Not Disturb • Carol's Daughter • Pamela Barsky

770.879.3553 | www.thecrankyprincess.com

LIVE AFTER LISA LOPES
I am... and I'm a real over the top
BY LISA LOPES

Atlanta
105
RESTAURANTS
BEST
DINE DRINK DANCE SHOP PLAY

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF OUR GREAT CITY
ATLANTA

Atlanta Magazine

local news

Gay police liaison seeks to fill task force seats

ATLANTA — Sgt. Connie Locke, the Atlanta Police Department's gay liaison, is taking applications from gays to fill seats on a task force created in November. The citizen task force will meet with Locke once a month to address issues that concern gay men, lesbians and transgendered people when dealing with law enforcement. The board of representatives holds seats for people in seven demographic categories, and two of the seats are filled. Dee Dee Chamblee, president of LaGender Inc. Support Group, will fill the transgendered seat, and Ryan Peterson volunteered to serve as the homeowner/neighborhood association representative. Locke is still accepting applications for people of color, bars/businesses, youth, non-profit groups and events.

As part of her liaison role, Locke will conduct crime prevention seminars where "GLBT businesses and residents are concentrated" and identify challenges through



Sgt. Connie Locke, the Atlanta Police Department's gay liaison, seeks five gay people to meet with her once a month about gay issues with the police. (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

crime analysis, community awareness seminars, patrol efforts and community responses. Locke also plans to make herself available for dispatch to all criminal incidents involving gay people "in order to gain the GLBT community's trust," she said. The cut-off date for applications to the panel is Dec. 20.

MORE INFO

Sgt. Connie Locke
Field Operations Division, APD
675 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
404-853-7775
clocke@atlantaapd.org

Pride committee seeks suggestions for 2003 theme

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Pride Committee requests suggestions from citizens for the Pride 2003 theme. Last year's theme was "Power of Pride." By submitting themes, gays have the chance to participate in an event designed by and for the "GLBT communities," said Donna Narducci, executive director of Atlanta Pride. "A theme serves as the unifying force of the event, the thread that ties it together, so we would like to hear from the many voices that make up our diverse community," Narducci said. The deadline for online and mail-in submissions is Dec. 14, and the Pride committee will announce the theme in January. Two VIP Pride party tickets and an event T-shirt go to the person or persons who submit the winning theme. Pride 2003 will be held at Piedmont Park on June 27-29.

MORE INFO

Atlanta Pride Committee
57 Executive Park South, Suite 380
404-929-0071
www.atlantapride.org/festival/theme.cfm

Adoption center welcomes gay parents

ATLANTA — The Independent Adoption Center, a national non-profit educational and counseling foundation that holds adoption information sessions, offers a workshop Dec. 7 to help people learn about building a family through open adoption. Gay men and lesbians are welcome, said Michelle Black, regional intake services associate for IAC. "We have no restrictions whatsoever," she said. "The services we would offer a gay couple would be the same as a heterosexual couple." The workshop covers the open adoption procedure and differentiates it from attorney-based, international and agency adoptions, Black said. In open adoption,

adoptive parents and birth parents work together to develop a plan that suits both parties at birth and beyond. Between one and two percent of IAC clients are gay men or lesbians, Black said. Reservations are required to attend the session.

MORE INFO

Adoption Information Session
Dec. 7, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Independent Adoption Center
3774 Lavista Road, Suite 100
404-321-6900
www.IndependentAdoptionCenter.org

Lesbian cancer group hosts holiday remembrance

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative hosts its third Holiday Remembrance Ritual on Dec. 11. The service is for "people who have lost someone close to them and for whom the memory is really sharp this year because of the holidays," said Shirley Adams, special projects coordinator at ALCI. The service's leader makes a general presentation that is followed by shared memories from group members, Adams said. Sister Margaret McAnoy, a chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital and long-time HIV/AIDS volunteer, leads this year's service. After group sharing, healing rituals involving candles, music, spoken word or meditation will follow, Adams said.

Christopher Seely

MORE INFO

Holiday Remembrance Ritual
Dec. 11, 7 p.m.
Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative
1530 DeKalb Ave. Suite A
404-688-2524
www.alci.org

Postcards from Home

A MUSICAL CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY, DEC. 15 - 7 PM
FREE ADMISSION

PRESENTED BY
THE FIRST MCC MUSIC MINISTRY,
LITURGICAL DANCE MINISTRY
AND DRAMA MINISTRY

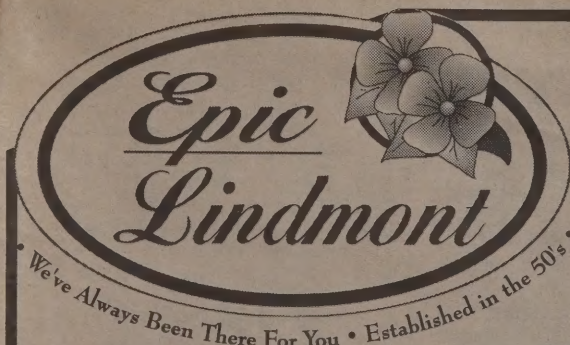


MCC
FIRST METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF ATLANTA

Just off I-85N at the North Druid Hills exit
right behind McDonald's
1379 Tullie Road Atlanta, GA 30329
404-325-4143
www.firstmcc.com

CHRISTMAS
EVE

AN EVENING OF CAROLS,
CANDLES AND COMMUNION
SUNDAY, DEC. 24 AT 10:30 PM



December Specials!
First Month's Rent \$299⁰⁰

- Parquet Hardwood Floors
- 1400 Square Feet
- 2 and 3 bedrooms townhomes
- Walk to Marta (Lindberg Station)
- Easy access to 400/85
- Huge Closets
- Dependable maintenance staff
- Rents from \$825 - \$975/mo

639 Lindberg Way NE • Atlanta, Ga 30324

404.237.2978

Mention this ad and we will waive your application fee!

EDITORIAL & PRODUCTION

Executive Editor CHRIS CRAIN EXT. 22
Editor MATTHEW A. HENNIE EXT. 29
News Editor LAURA DOUGLAS-BROWN EXT. 19
Local Arts Editor MIKE FLEMING EXT. 30
Staff Writer JENNIFER J. SMITH EXT. 20
Editorial Assistant CHRISTOPHER SEELY EXT. 34
Staff Photographer R.O. YOUNGBLOOD EXT. 21
Correspondents LOU CHIBBARO JR., KARA FOX,
BRIAN MOYLAN, PENNY WEAVER
Columnists CINDY ABEL, MICHAEL ALVEAR,
MERYL COHN, JIM FARMER, JONATHAN LERNER,
DREW PLANT
Contributors J.S. HALL, I. EDWARD SAYE JR.,
STEVE WARREN
Illustrators ALISON BECHDEL, ERIC ORNER,
RON WILLIAMS
Production Manager JOHN NAIL EXT. 16
Graphic Designers
IRMA ALLEN EXT. 17
MATT BURKHALTER EXT. 18
SARAH FERRER-CORDERO EXT. 28
Webmaster JED DEMPSEY 202-797-7000

SALES & ADMINISTRATION

General Manager MIKE KITCHENS EXT. 31
Accounting Manager JASON COHEN EXT. 14
Circulation CHERYL SUMMERVILLE EXT. 12
Classifieds TOM JONES EXT. 15
Sales Manager BOB GUNBY EXT. 24
Account Executives
JEFFREY BURRELL EXT. 13
KELLY ALDER EXT. 33
CHUCK HERRHOLTZ EXT. 23
R.O. YOUNGBLOOD EXT. 21
CHRISTINE SOLLY EXT. 11
ADAM SILVEY EXT. 26
National Ad Representative
RIVENDELL MARKETING
212-242-6863 or 908-232-2021
Sales Asst./Front Desk KEVIN SMITH EXT. 10

THE EDITORIAL POSITIONS of Southern Voice are expressed in editorials and in editor's notes as determined by the paper's editors. Other opinions are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Southern Voice or its staff.

TO SUBMIT A LETTER OR COMMENTARY:

Letters should be fewer than 400 words; commentaries should be fewer than 750 words. Submissions may be edited for content and length, and must include a name, address and phone number for verification. Send submissions by fax to 404-876-2709 or by regular mail to the Southern Voice office, attn: Letters/Commentary.

ADDRESS: 1075 Zonolite Road, Suite 1-D
Atlanta, GA 30306
PHONE: 404-876-1819
FAX: 404-876-2709
E-MAIL: editor@svo.com
INTERNET: www.svo.com
PUBLISHER: Window Media LLC

A Window Media Publication

© 2002, Window Media LLC
All rights reserved.

Forum

guest editorial

Lessons from a gay bashing

Racism and homophobia both blame the victim:
The black man shouldn't eyeball a white woman,
and a man shouldn't eyeball another man.

By CRAIG WASHINGTON

SINCE THE ANTI-GAY BEATING last month at Morehouse College, one of the most revered black academic institutions in the nation has become the focus of national scrutiny.

Even after the district attorney announced he would prosecute the attack as a hate crime, Morehouse President Walter Massey has yet to admit to a history of on-campus anti-gay abuse and that this crime was motivated by the perception that the victim was homosexual.

Like most private schools, Morehouse will not voluntarily air its soiled linens. It has given the world some of its most celebrated leaders and scholars and prides itself on maintaining standards of academic excellence.

But the true mark of distinction at Morehouse is the sense of decorum and institutional loyalty instilled in generations of young men. The fabled "Morehouse man" is an enduring symbol of black male excellence that reflects traditional African-American values and the behavior codes used to uphold them.

SEXUALITY IN GENERAL AND CERTAINLY homosexuality specifically, confound those codes. The emergence of contemporary black male homosexual identities and culture is forcing all-black institutions to reexamine rigid norms of gender propriety and the related constructs of manhood.

Many men, though they may not use the term "gay" to self-identify, are not ashamed of their sexuality and are constructing self-affirming oases within these black spaces. This is what is happening at Morehouse College, which for the first time in its history now has an official gay student organization called Safe Space.

This new assertion of self-legitimized non-heterosexuals has met with widespread resistance. Many straight

Morehouse men resent the challenges to their heterosexist privilege that are presented by gays and women who will not be dominated, who will not stay in their place.

Gregory Love, the student who was attacked, was perceived as not staying in his place. His alleged gaze at another man's naked body traverses the boundaries that many heterosexual men feel entitled to cross when they openly glare at a Spelman student's behind. Yet because the gaze is unwanted and socially unacceptable and does not serve heterosexual need, it is a violation for which the gazer must be punished.

BLACK PEOPLE HAVE TRADITIONALLY embraced gay men and lesbians, but public dialogue about homosexuality has aroused deep-seeded cultural anxieties. We are troubled by the fluid nature of sexuality that often flouts the neat categories we've imposed to contain it. If student violence is a coffee spill on the cuff, troublesome but non-threatening, then homosexuality is a semen stain on the dress (or trousers), loaded with indictment, buried deep down in the basket.

Many blacks who face racism daily are slow to confess the privileges they derive and the oppression they wield or support within their own communities. Some black men who are well versed in their analysis of racism do not recognize their own sexism and how black women are subjugated by it. Black heterosexual women may demonstrate an understanding of both racism and sexism and yet disclaim the parallel elements that comprise homophobia.

People find it difficult to prioritize forms of oppression that do not directly affect them. We often resist admitting to the privileges we access through our membership in certain "groups" — as whites, men, heterosexuals, rich people, Christians. It is easier to cite our status as victims, since it incurs little if any responsibility.

Race and sexual orientation are in many

SOUTHERN VOICE

DECEMBER 6, 2002

PAGE 26

ways dissimilar, but both racism and homophobia are perpetuated by stereotyping: Black men are criminals; gays are child molesters. And both racism and homophobia blame the victim: Emmet Till shouldn't have eyeballed a white woman; Greg Love shouldn't have eyeballed another man.

Just as many white people rush to blame black victims for being brutalized by racist police, and many men question what the rape victim was doing at her rapist's hotel room anyway, some are searching for any culpability they can pin on Love, suggesting perhaps he had been sexually harassing Aaron Price, his attacker, despite any evidence.

If the act is warranted and thus not a crime, then we don't have to admit to our own biases and the power we have to enforce them.

IF A BLACK MALE STUDENT AT A mainstream college was beaten with a bat for looking at a white female student, you can bet that major black social justice organizations would be holding press conferences, marches and demonstrations.

But no local or national black organizations have been denouncing the Morehouse attack. Massey recently announced that he had convened a "blue ribbon panel" to address diversity issues. There is only one openly gay participant among the hand-picked panelists. Imagine how enraged blacks would be if a white college, prompted by the racist attack of a black student, assembled a panel with just one African-American to address racism.

Hopefully Morehouse and the black community at large will learn lessons from this experience. We who strive for social justice for all and not only our constituency cannot remain bound by the constraints of our comfort zones. Black people have to risk stepping into uncharted territory and look past oppression hierarchies — "your blues ain't as bad as mine" — that blur the common vision of the disenfranchised.

I was advised by a colleague to be patient with Morehouse since "they were not prepared to deal with this." Social change does not wait for us to be prepared to fight for it.

This incident is a calling and we must muster the courage to look first inward and unload the prejudice that infects us as individuals and as a society, right now. If civil rights workers had waited until black people were ready for freedom, and white people were ready to confront racism, many of us might still be riding at the back of the bus.

@ Craig Washington is executive director for the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Center and can be reached at cw@aglc.org.

